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March 2, 2006

Mr. Gene Dawson, Jr.
Pape-Dawson Engineers, Inc.
555 East Ramsey
San Antonio, TX 78216

**Re: Letter Report on a Historic Building Review of a Spanish Colonial Revival House
Located on Culebra Road, San Antonio, Texas.**

Dear Mr. Dawson:

This letter constitutes SWCA's report on the results of an architectural survey and historic aerial photograph and topographic map review of a Spanish Colonial Revival house location off of Culebra Road between FM 1560 and Roft Road, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas. The report includes the methodology used in the investigations, a brief history of the area, the condition of the building, and a preliminary evaluation of historic significance. This letter report can be used as a planning document for coordination with the San Antonio Historic Preservation Office (HPO).

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at (512) 476-0891.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mindy L. Bonine". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped "M" and a long, sweeping underline.

Mindy L. Bonine
Senior Project Manager

Enclosures

**LETTER REPORT ON A HISTORIC BUILDING REVIEW OF A SPANISH
COLONIAL REVIVAL HOUSE LOCATED ON CULEBRA ROAD, SAN ANTONIO,
TEXAS**

By Mindy L. Bonine

BACKGROUND

D.R. Horton dba Continental Homes is partnering with Silverado Brothers to develop properties located on the south side of Culebra Road between FM 1560 and Roft Road, San Antonio, Bexar County Texas. A stucco Spanish Colonial Revival two-story house is located within the construction area, accompanied by two nearby outbuildings (Figure 1). The house is approximately 14 miles west of the San Antonio city center and about 4 miles south-southwest of Helotes, Texas. The house has been abandoned for some time, is overgrown with vegetation, and both outbuildings have collapsed. As part of the developers compliance with the City of San Antonio's Historic Preservation and Design Section of the Unified Development Code, Pape-Dawson Engineers, Inc. contracted SWCA Environmental Consultants to conduct an historic aerial photograph and topographic map review of the area and perform an architectural evaluation of the standing building to determine the possible historic significance and integrity of the resource. The building was first evaluated to determine its likely age, and if found to be over 50 years, was evaluated according to criteria for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), which is the benchmark for evaluating a resource's historic significance.

BRIEF HISTORIC CONTEXT

The principle European settlement of the San Antonio area began in 1718, with the founding of Mission San Antonio de Valero and Presidio San Antonio de B  xar. By the 1730s, the population of the area was about 900, with about 300 Spanish and 600 Native American converts (Long 2006a). Through the years, San Antonio switched from Spanish rule, to Mexican, Texan, and finally United States influence. Constant fighting kept the population of San Antonio low, but after the 1840s, more immigrants decided to settle in the area. Subsistence farming was the norm, until cattle drives and the arrival of the railroad in the 1860s and 1880s turned San Antonio into an economic hub (Long 2006a). The population began to grow, and surrounding areas in Bexar County were settled. The closest community to the project area, Helotes, was settled around 1856 by Mexicans who intermarried with the Apache Indians camped in the vicinity (Long 2006b). A man named Chaca was supposed to have been the first person to build a house and cultivate a cornfield at Helotes and may have been responsible for the name, which in Spanish means "green roasting ear of corn." A post office opened at Helotes in 1873, and by 1885 the community had a hotel, a school, a general store, a blacksmith, and a population of 50.

By 1914 its population had climbed to 700, but during the Depression and through World War II the number of residents fell to 100. Afterwards, the town grew steadily. The town incorporated in the 1980s and in 1990 had 1,535 inhabitants and 48 businesses (Long 2006b). The project area, located about 4 miles south-southwest of Helotes, remained mostly rural in character, although Culebra Road was in place from at least the turn of the century. In the 1970s, San Antonio expanded into the areas just east of the project area, called "Loopland," as it was bounded by Loop 410 on the south and Loop 1604 on the north.

METHODS

Prior to this investigation, the records of the Texas Historic Sites Atlas (Atlas) online database were reviewed for any previously recorded historic archeological sites, NRHP properties, State Archeological Landmarks (SALs), official Texas historical markers (OTHMs), Registered Texas Historic Landmarks (RTHLs), cemeteries, and local neighborhood surveys located in or near the project area. No historic properties were located, indicating the Spanish Colonial Revival house had not been previously assessed for its age, integrity, and possible significance. Thus, to conduct a review of the building, historic aerial photographs of the area were ordered and evaluated to assess the presence and condition of the house and surrounding property, and historic topographic maps were obtained and examined for the development of the area. Online catalogs and finding aids, such as the Handbook of Texas Online, Center for American History, Benson Latin American Collection, Perry-Castañeda Library, and Texas State Library were consulted for material relating to the local history.

Following the historic map and photograph review, an SWCA architectural historian conducted a site visit to the stucco house. As the outbuildings were more than 50 percent destroyed, they were not evaluated as part of this investigation, other than to determine if they were contemporaneous with the house. The house was photo-documented, and notes as to construction method, building function, and alterations were completed. Nearby temporally diagnostic debris was identified to assist with the possible dates of occupation.

The criteria established by the National Park Service to determine NRHP eligibility was used to evaluate the building. To be eligible for the NRHP, the resource must be a site, district, building, structure, or object that is at least 50 years old, possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and is at least one of the following (taken from 36 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Part 60):

- (a) associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- (b) associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;

- (c) an embodiment of distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- (d) likely to yield, or have yielded, information important in prehistory or history.

To qualify for the NRHP, the resource must meet one of the criteria for evaluation by representing or symbolizing a broader pattern of history—whether it is an event or person that changed existing patterns of society, a style or form of technology that changed the way people saw and did things, or something that provided valuable information about our own history that would otherwise be lost (i.e., a historic context). If the resource can be linked with an important aspect of history, whether it is the history of a local community or a sign of nationwide change, the resource is considered significant, and may be eligible for the NRHP.

In addition to an association with a broader historic context, the resource must also retain its historic integrity. This means the resource must be able to *convey its significance*, i.e., to adequately represent in a physical way what makes the property special. This is established by looking at seven aspects: if the resource is in its original place, if it retains its original design, if the environmental setting is intact, if the original materials are still present, if the workmanship is visible, if the property evokes a feeling of a particular time, and if the association with past persons or events are present. The resource must suitably represent the time period of significance through these aspects in order to be eligible for the NRHP.

RESULTS

AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH REVIEW

Six aerial photographs of the project area were obtained. They include the following: a 1938 photo from the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS), a 1966 photo from the ASCS, a 1977 photo from the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), a 1986 photo from TxDOT, a 1995 U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) photo, and finally a 2004 Airphoto USA photo (see attached). All are to a scale of 1 inch=500 feet. An analysis of the photographs clearly indicates that the Spanish Colonial Revival house was present in 1938. A front drive that ends in a turnaround, one of the still existing outbuildings, and another unknown outbuilding are visible. The other existing outbuilding is likely concealed by tree canopy. What appears to be a landscaped front lawn can be seen in front of the house, as well as cleared fields to the side and behind the buildings. The 1966 photograph shows a similar arrangement, with an additional cleared field to the west of the driveway. Two trees have grown up on either side of the house. The 1977 photograph is darker, but compared to the 1966 photograph, the only change appears

to be the growth of several trees around the buildings. Some changes were apparent in the 1986 photograph, including the removal of two trees on either side of the house, while the driveway is beginning to be obscured by vegetation. One of the outbuildings present in the earlier photographs is now missing. This may mark the abandonment phase, but another drive leads to the rear of the house that may have been the alternate way to access the house. Both the 1995 and 2004 photographs show an increased density of vegetation, and an overgrowth of the alternate drive. The area had most certainly been abandoned by this point in time, and even the surrounding fields were being repopulated with native vegetation by 2004.

HISTORIC TOPOGRAPHIC REVIEW

Five historic topographic maps were acquired for this review. All are Culebra Hill 7.5-minute USGS topographic maps. The project area is located in the far southwest corner of each map. They include a 1953 map, a 1966 map, a 1973 photorevised map of the 1966 map, a 1982 photorevised map of the 1966 map, and a currently-used 1992 map (see attached). The two photorevised maps used aerial photographs to mark changes to an earlier map; these changes are drawn in purple to indicate the information seen on the aerial photograph had not been field checked. The 1953 topographic map shows the Spanish Colonial Revival house at its current location. Several outbuildings are also marked, presumably the two buildings seen in the 1938 aerial photograph. Other outbuildings not associated with this study are also indicated. The front drive from Culebra Road is not marked, but another possible residence southeast of the stucco house can be seen. However, there does not seem to be any photographic evidence to support this second residence. The 1966 map shows only the Spanish Colonial Revival house; the nearby outbuildings have been removed from the map. The 1973 photorevised map had added a roadway connecting Culebra Road and Roft Road, skirting the Spanish Colonial Revival House. Another possible residence was marked on the map to the southeast, but it was not in the same location as the residence indicated on the 1953 map. The 1982 photorevised map does not show any change from the 1973 photorevised map. The 1992 map, which had been field verified, shows an alteration in the roadway towards the house, and the possible residence had been changed to an outbuilding.

ARCHITECTURAL EVALUATION

A site visit was conducted on February 27, 2006, and the house present in the project area was evaluated for its integrity and potential historic significance. The building is identified as a simple massed plan two-story house with a flat roof and parapet (Figure 2). A single-story front porch with a flat roof and arched entryways spans the entire façade and beyond to create two small wings. The walls are constructed of marl or very low-grade limestone blocks, which is

sheathed in metal lath attached with nails, and covered with white stucco (Figure 3). At least two additions to the house were observed, a single-story addition to the east side of the house and a two-story addition to the rear (Figure 4). The rear addition is built with the same marl or limestone blocks on the bottom floor and a wood-frame second floor. The original portion of the house contains a decorative cap on the parapet of straight barrel mission tile, while the additions have American Spanish Tile. The windows throughout the house are steel-frame casement windows (Figure 5), and the front doors (n=2) are comprised of wood frames and glass panels. The doors are about 2 feet wide. The exterior contains several decorative elements such as quoins along the corners of the façade and matching door surrounds, decorative stucco-covered stone lintels at the top of the front windows and doors, and tile decorative vents. These stylistic forms and materials conform to the Spanish Colonial Revival style (or as defined by McAlester and McAlester [2004], "Spanish Eclectic"), which was popular from 1915 to about 1940.

The interior of the oldest part of the house is divided into rooms by marl or limestone block walls covered with plaster (Figure 6). The ceiling and interior surfaces of the additions are finished with wood lath and plaster (Figure 7). Doors were not seen in many of the interior openings, which are primarily arched at the top. One fireplace was seen in the living area, and another toppled fireplace and chimney is attached to the one-story addition to the side of the house. An enameled cast-iron claw-foot tub was seen in the bathroom, and the kitchen contains plywood cabinetry and sea-green 4-x-4-inch tile countertop and backsplash. Floor tile was observed in the kitchen, but the remainder of the house is covered with tongue-and-groove hardwood flooring. Numerous sections of the house have decayed and fallen in, including the roof of the front porch, several sections of interior plaster, the roof of the rear addition, and the entire wall containing the fireplace chimney of the one-story addition. The exterior wall of the second story rear addition has tilted inward and all of the exterior stucco has fallen off (Figure 8), and the round stucco-covered stone cellar is exposed (Figure 9). Several sections of the house could not be accessed due to the damage, including the second story.

In addition to the architectural evaluation, a search of the scattered surface artifacts was made to find possible diagnostic material. The artifacts cover a wide range of time from the present to the historic, but in sum represented a twentieth century assemblage. The large quantities of nails imbedded in the marl/soft limestone used to hold the metal lath are all machine-made wire nails with pan heads. These types of nails are common from the 1880s (Fontana and Greenleaf 1962), replacing the square cut nails of the nineteenth century. All of the bottles seen at the site are machine made (post 1900), and there was no evidence of solarization (a pink or amethyst color resulting from the manganese in clear glass being exposed to sunlight), which would indicate an occupation date from the nineteenth century to about 1920 (Bureau of Land Management 2006). The window glass has a weather-etched surface, appearing oily and semi-transparent, which would indicate some decades of exposure to the elements. The brick found around the house is

all machine-made wire-cut brick stamped with “ALAMO,” and the loose roof tiles found on the ground were stamped with “IMPERIAL.” These roofing tiles were manufactured by the Ludowici-Celadon Company beginning in 1902 (Ludowici Roof Tile 2006). All of the tin cans seen in the vicinity are double locked seams indicative of modern sanitary can, which was patented in 1894 but not in general use until the 1920s (Fontana and Greenleaf 1962).

The two outbuildings near the house are constructed of the same marl/soft limestone as the house, and are also covered in nailed-in wire lath and stucco. The roofs appear to be made of timber frame, but both have fallen in. As the same materials were used for the outbuilding as with the house, they appear to be contemporaneous.

SUMMARY

Based on the preponderance of evidence presented above, it appears that the stucco house located off of Culebra Road between Roft Road and FM 1560 is a Spanish Colonial Revival house, which is common style in Bexar County and the San Antonio metro area. It is of historic age, likely initially built and occupied in the 1920s. This was determined by the architectural style of the building, the materials used in its construction, the surface artifacts around the house, and the results of the historic aerial photograph and topographic map review. The additions to the house were built a short time later, as they used similar building materials and construction techniques. In addition, the two collapsed outbuildings were also constructed in a similar manner, and seem to be of the same period. The house appears to be a central residence, and due to the size of the building and its age, it could be speculated that the residents were well-off members of the community. However, as this investigation did not include a title search or extensive archival research, it is unknown if the residents were significant contributors to local or regional history, or if a significant event occurred there that shaped the broad pattern of history.

As the house is of historic age, further assessment was necessary to determine if the building meets the criteria for evaluation to the NRHP. Principally, the building's historic integrity was assessed, as this is a significant aspect of the eligibility requirements. Based on the aerial photographs, the location of the building has not changed, which is beneficial to the overall understanding of the resource. Unfortunately, the semi-collapsed state of the house significantly compromises the historic integrity of the building, and as such does not convey the significance of the building as it appeared during its lifetime. Some of the structural elements, such as the front façade and overall footprint are still intact, but the side and rear walls are heavily compromised and the original appearance cannot be determined. Thus, the design, materials, and workmanship of these sections cannot be entirely understood. The historic character of the environmental setting has changed as well—fields have gone fallow and residential development surrounds the project area. Finally, the property does not appear to retain the feeling or

association with a specific period of time, or a link with persons or events in the past. Thus, the Spanish Colonial Revival house is not in sufficient condition with preserved features, artifacts, and special relationships to convey important associations with events or persons, to illustrate a unique site type, time period, method of construction, or work of a master, or contribute important information to history. Even if the resource is eligible under one of the four criteria for evaluation mentioned above, without historic integrity, the resource is not considered significant, and does not meet the eligibility requirements for listing on the NRHP. On the basis of this research, no further historic or archaeological investigations are recommended.

REFERENCES

Bureau of Land Management

- 2006 Historic Glass Bottle Identification and Information Website, "Bottle/Glass Colors," http://www.blm.gov/historic_bottles/colors.htm (assessed March 1, 2006).

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- 1962 "Johnny Ward's Ranch: a Study in Historic Archaeology." *The Kiva* 28.

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Long, C.

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Ludowici Roof Tile

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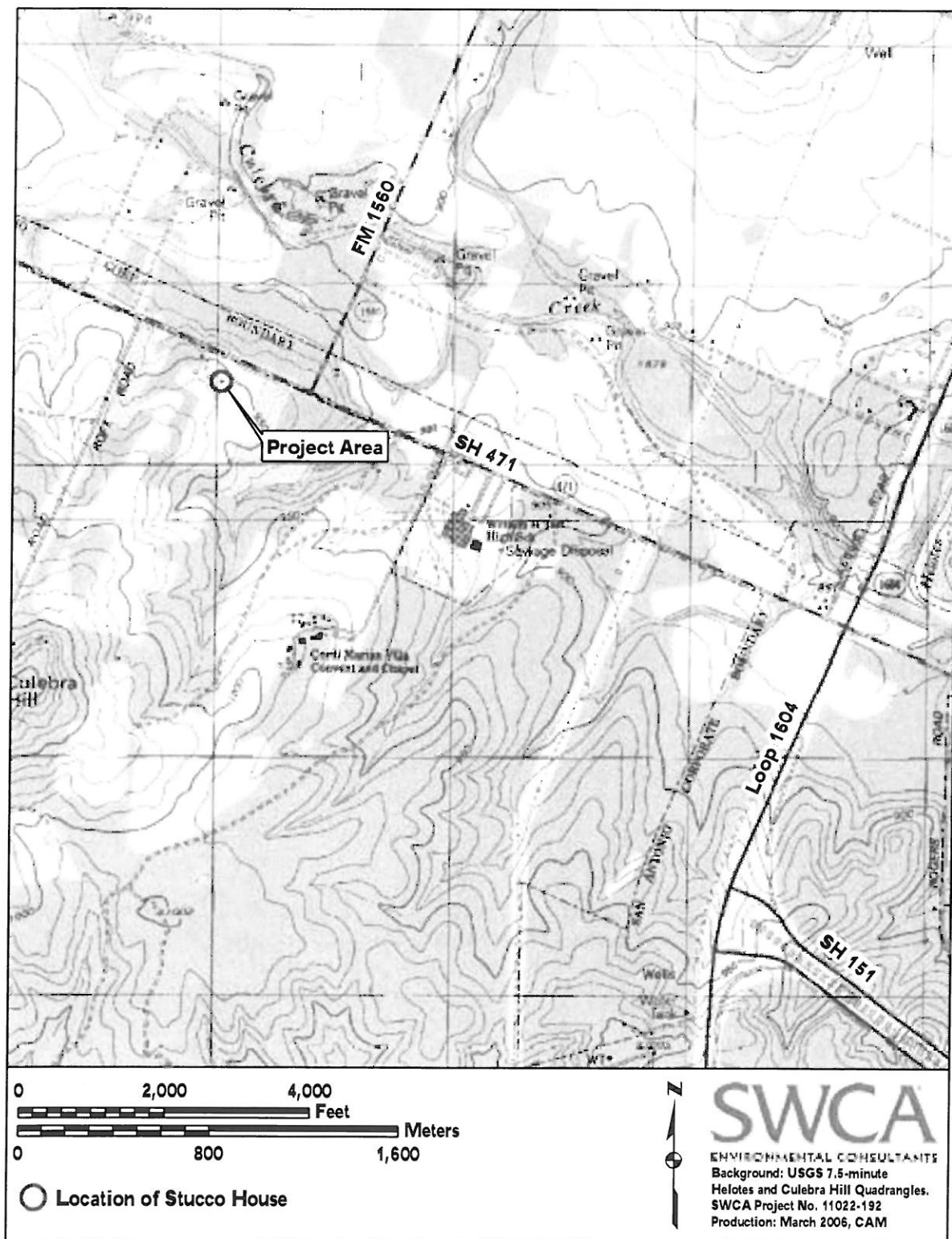


Figure 1. Project location map.



Figure 2. Façade of the stucco Spanish Colonial Revival house.



Figure 3. Two front doors of the house, note peeling stucco and nails.



Figure 4. One-story addition (right) and two-story addition (left).



Figure 5. Steel frame casement windows and decorative lintel.



Figure 6. Interior living area.



Figure 7. Lath and plaster ceiling.



Figure 8. Rear of stucco house, showing collapsed second story.



Figure 9. Collapsed chimney to the lower left of photo, revealing round cellar.



1938 ASCS Aerial Photograph



1966 ASCS Aerial Photograph

4-25-77

1977 TxDOT Aerial Photograph



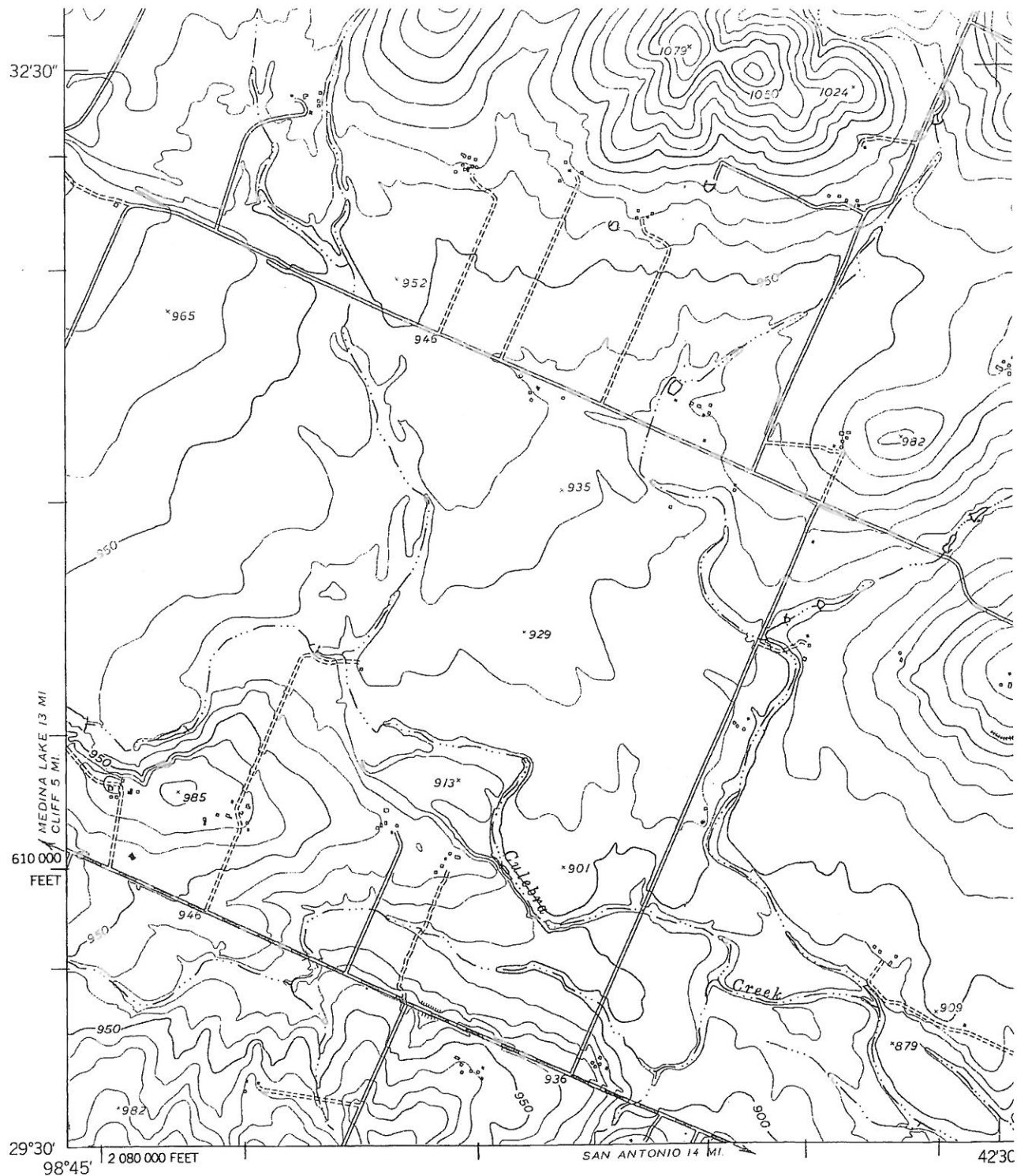
1986 TxDOT Aerial Photograph



1995 USGS Aerial Photograph



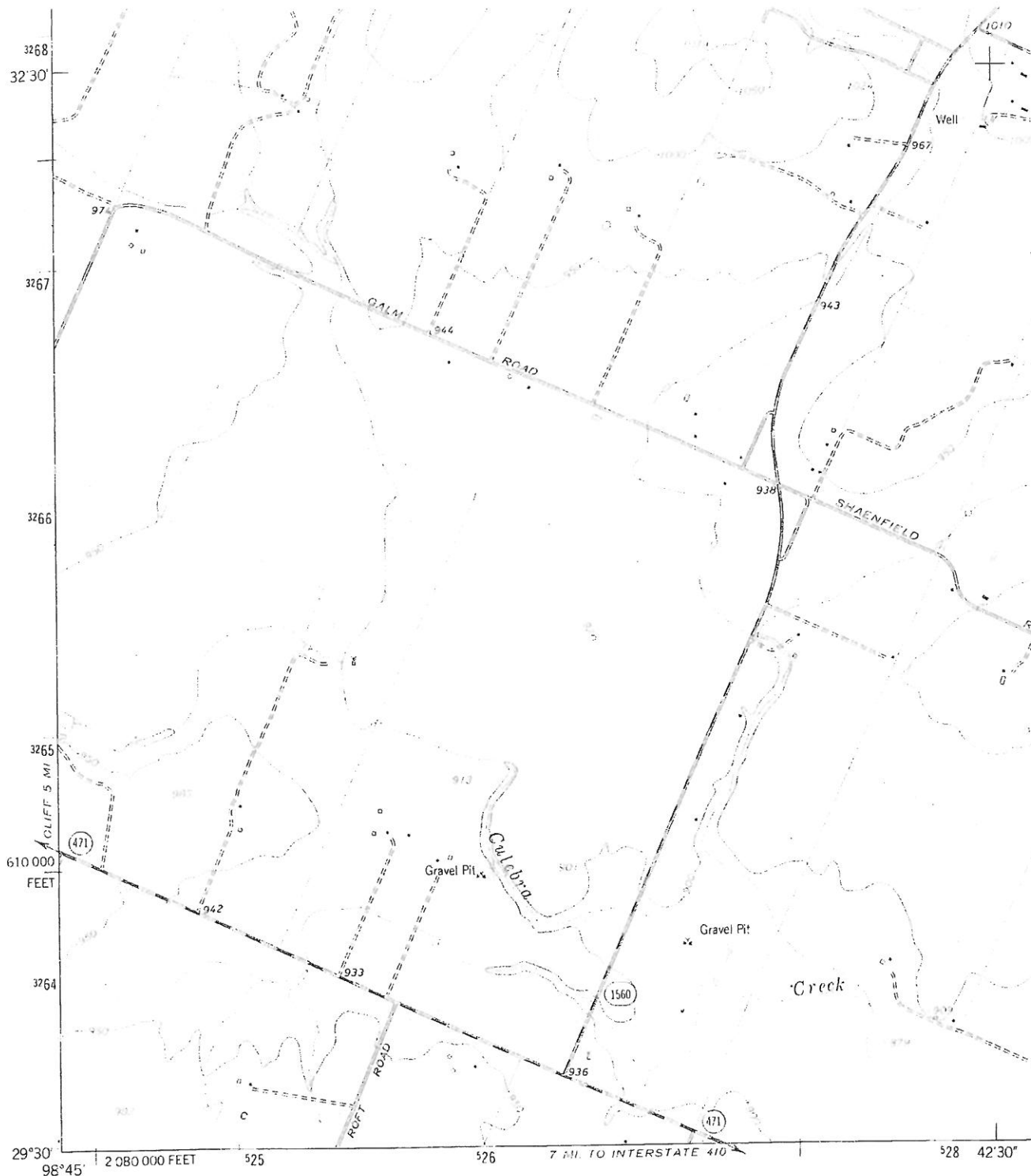
2004 Airphoto USA Aerial Photograph



Mapped by the Army Map Service
 Published for civil use by the Geological Survey
 Control by USGS, USC&GS, and USCE
 Topography from aerial photographs by photogrammetric methods
 Aerial photographs taken 1952. Photography field annotated 1953
 Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
 10,000-foot grid based on Texas coordinate system,
 south central zone
 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
 zone 14, shown in blue
 Unchecked elevations are shown in brown

TRUE NORTH
 MAGNETIC NORTH
 9 1/2°
 APPROXIMATE MEAN
 DECLINATION, 1953

1753



ILACOSTE NE
6242 IV NE

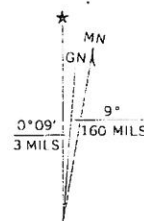
Mapped by the Army Map Service
Edited and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and USCE

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
taken 1952. Field checked 1953. Revised by Geological Survey
from aerial photographs taken 1966. Field checked 1966

Polyconic projection 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Texas coordinate system,
south central zone

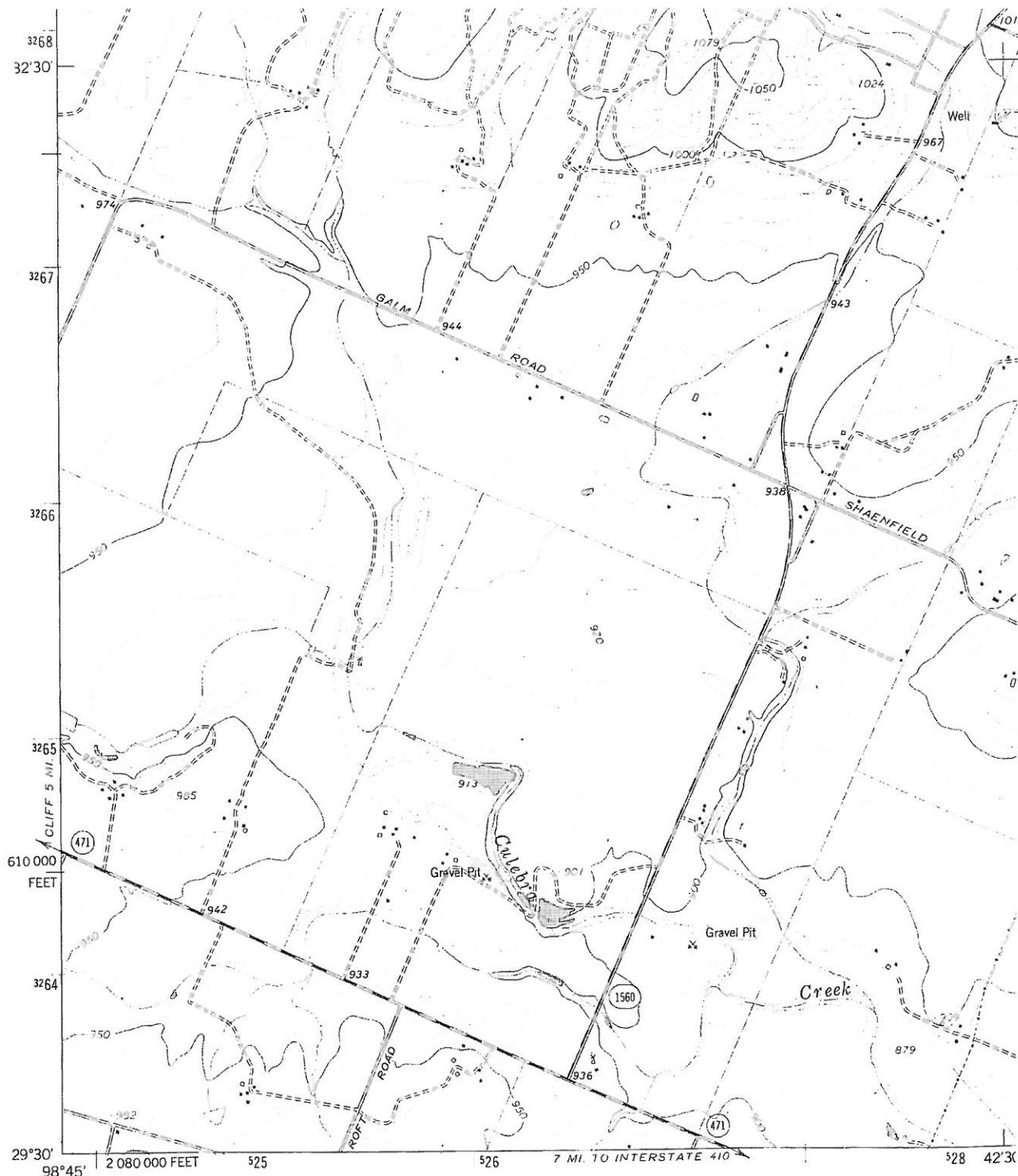
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 14, shown in blue

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines



UTM GRID AND 1965 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

1966



(LACOSTE NE)
6242 IV NE

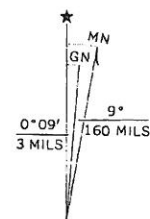
Mapped by the Army Map Service
Edited and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and USCE

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
taken 1952. Field checked 1953. Revised by Geological Survey
from aerial photographs taken 1966. Field checked 1966

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Texas coordinate system,
south central zone
1000-metre Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 14, shown in blue

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines

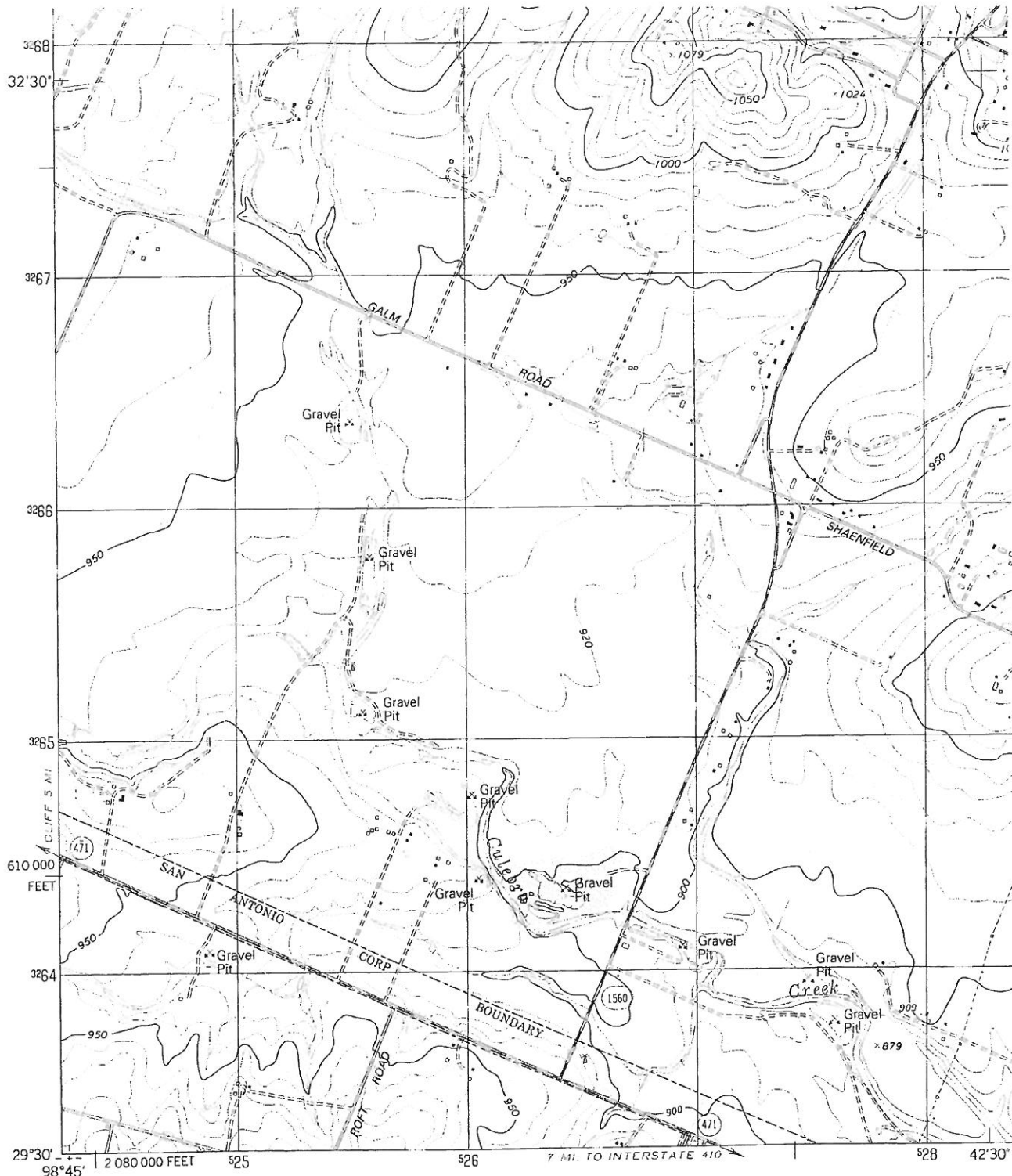
Revisions shown in purple compiled by the Geological Survey from
aerial photographs taken 1973. This information not field checked



UTM GRID AND 1973 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

1966

Photorevision 1973



(LACOSTE NE)
6242 IV NE

Produced by the United States Geological Survey

Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA

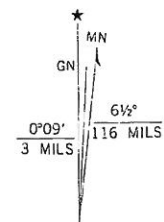
Compiled by Defense Mapping Agency from aerial photographs taken 1952. Revised from aerial photographs taken 1986. Field checked 1986. Map edited 1992.

North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27). Projection and 10 000-foot grid ticks: Texas Coordinate System, south central zone (Lambert Conformal Conic). 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 14.

The difference between NAD 27 and North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) for 7.5 minute intersections is given in USGS Bulletin 1875. The NAD 83 is shown by dashed corner ticks.

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown.

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked.



UTM GRID AND 1992 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

1992